

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 NEA-10
L-03 DOE-11 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 INR-10
NSAE-00 NASA-01 NSC-05 SOE-02 SS-15 OES-07 PA-01
USIA-06 SP-02 CEQ-01 NRC-05 /153 W
-----035026 160511Z /11

P R 160058Z FEB 78

FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9607

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USUN 0548

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TSPA, UN

SUBJ: UN OUTER SPACE S&T SUBCOMMITTEE: TUESDAY PM SESSION

1. ECUADOR IN ITS FIRST STATEMENT AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE EXPRESSED GENERAL APPRECIATION OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE EFFORTS IN SPACE, LAUDED THE CONSENSUS NATURE OF THE FORUM, AND PRAISED US, USSR AND ESA ACTIVITIES IN PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE.

2. ECUADOR CALLED FOR COORDINATION BETWEEN LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE AND S&T SUBCOMMITTEE. CITED NEED TO RESPECT NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY IN CONDUCTING REMOTE SENSING ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORTED NOTION OF CATEGORIZING DATA AS A BASIS FOR CONTROLLING DISSEMINATION. BRIEFLY RESTATED POSITION ON GEOSTATIONARY ORBIT AS A LIMITED NATURAL RESOURCE OF ALL MANKIND BUT PARTICULARLY OF UNDERLYING COUNTRIES. QUOTED BRIEFLY FROM PREVIOUS STATEMENT OF POSITION.

3. ECUADOR MADE NO STATEMENT AT THIS TIME ON THE COSMOS 954 INCIDENT OR RELATED MATTERS.

4. DELS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA, GDR AND POLAND IN TURN
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PRESENTED LENGTHLY REVIEW OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ACHIEVEMENTS IN SPACE. GDR EXPLICITLY SUPPORTED SOVIET PROPOSAL TO DISTINGUISH REMOTELY SENSED DATA ON BASIS OF SPATIAL RESOLUTION AIMING AT A LEGAL REGIME TO CONTROL DISSEMINATION. ALL THREE STATED SUPPORT FOR A UN CONFERENCE ON OUTER SPACE THAT COULD CONSIDER ALL MATTERS RELATING TO SPACE ACTIVITIES, IMPLYING

LEGAL AS WELL AS TECHNICAL.

5. EACH OF THE 3 BLOC COUNTRIES EXPLICITLY STATED THEY WERE NOT IN FAVOR OF ESTABLISHING A WORKING GROUP ON SPACE NUCLEAR POWER NOR WERE THEY IN FAVOR OF CONSIDERING ANY NEW MULTILATERAL INSTRUMENTS IN THIS REGARD.

6. THE SOVIET DEL (ACADEMICIAN FEDOROV) THEN MADE AN HOUR LONG PRESENTATION CONCENTRATING MAINLY UPON SOVIET TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES IN SPACE DURING THE LAST YEAR. HE NOTED THAT THEIR STANDING OFFER OF REMOTE SENSING SERVICES MADE LAST YEAR HAD EVOKED CONSIDERABLE INTEREST AMONG COUNTRIES AND MANY HAD ACCEPTED THE OFFER. HE DID NOT NAME THEM.

7. AS THE LAST ITEM OF INTEREST IN HIS STATEMENT, SOVIET DEL DISCUSSED COSMOS 954 INCIDENT. HE STATED THAT REPORT OF FACTS GIVEN BY CANADIAN DEL WAS ACCURATE. HE SAID THAT 954 WENT OUT OF CONTROL WHEN IT WAS OVER A PART OF THE WORLD WHERE IT COULD NOT BE SEEN BY THE USSR. THE SOVIETS DON'T KNOW WHY IT WENT OUT OF CONTROL; IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN HIT BY ANOTHER OBJECT.

8. SOV DEL NOTED THAT THEIR EXPERTS EXPECTED RE-ENTRY TO OCCUR OVER ALEUTIANS AND "INFORMED THE UNITED STATES". WHEN IT RE-ENTERED IN CANADA IT WAS OUT OF VIEW OF THE USSR AND THEREFORE USSR EXPERTS DID NOT KNOW WHERE IT
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CAME DOWN. WHEN THEY WERE INFORMED OF THE RE-ENTRY BY THE US, HE SAID THEY PROMPTLY NOTIFIED CANADA AND OFFERED THEIR ASSISTANCE TO CANADA. THIS OFFER WAS REJECTED.

9. SOV DEL THEN COMMENTED ON THE "CAMPAIGN OF SPECULATION" IN THE PRESS OF THE US AND OTHER COUNTRIES. HE NOTED SEVERAL LINES EACH FROM VARIOUS ISSUES OF NY TIMES AND THE NY POST. HE SAID THAT "THE CAMPAIGN WAS AIMED AT A CLEAR AND DISTINCT PURPOSE." HOWEVER, HE STATED THAT IT WAS THE PRESS ALONE THAT SEEMED RESPONSIBLE; HE CITED NO GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL OR SCIENTIST WAS QUOTED IN SUCH SPECULATION. HE THEN ASSERTED THAT THE DEBATES IN THE CURRENT MEETING REFLECT THE RESULTS OF THE PRESS CAMPAIGN TO CREATE ANXIETY.

10. SO DEL ADDRESSED QUESTION OF NEED FOR HIGH ENERGY SOURCES IN CERTAIN SPACE ACTIVITIES SUCH AS: IN METEOROLOGICAL SATELLITES USING "RADIO LOCATORS" TO LOCATE AREAS OF PRECIPITATION OR STORM PHENOMENA; GROUND SURVEYING WHERE CLOUD PENETRATION IS NEEDED; AND TV BROADCASTING FOR SPACE. NUCLEAR SOURCES PRESENT AN ATTRACTIVE OPTION FOR HIGH ENERGY.

11. ON QUESTION OF SAFETY OF NUCLEAR POWER SOURCES
IN SPACE, SOV DEL NOTED THAT ANY RE-ENTRY CAN LEAD TO
DAMAGE. THE RISK IS NOT ONLY RELATED TO NUCLEAR POWER
BUT TO THE MASS OF THE OBJECT AND WHETHER IT BREAKS UP
DURING RE-ENTRY. SOVIETS ARE NOT UNCONCERNED WITH SAFETY;
THEY TAKE SUBSTANTIAL PRECAUTIONS BUT SOME RISK IS ALWAYS
INVOLVED. THESE RISK SHOULD NOT STOP SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS;
SUCH PROGRESS REQUIRES THE USE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY SOURCES.

12. SOV DEL NOTED THAT THERE IS NO NEED FOR NEW AGREE-
MENTS. THE LAUNCHING STATE IS LIABLE FOR DAMAGES CAUSED.

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USIA-06 SP-02 CEQ-01 NRC-05 /153 W
-----035142 160510Z /11

P R 160058Z FEB 78
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USUN 0548

13. SOV DEL ASKED IF THE THREAT POSED BY RADIOACTIVE
DEBRIS IN THIS CASE WAS TRULY GRAVE. WE NOTED THAT
THREAT FROM NUCLEAR ARSENALS WAS COUNTLESS TIMES GREATER.
HE CALLED FOR AN END TO TESTS OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND NOTED
THAT A TOTAL TEST BAN WAS NEAR AT HAND. HE SAID IF STATES
ARE CONCERNED ABOUT RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINATION WE SHOULD
ADDRESS THOSE PROBLEMS.

14. COMPARING THE SMALL AMOUNT OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL
IN SPACE NUCLEAR REACTORS WITH AMOUNT IN NUCLEAR POWERED
SUBMARINES, SOV DEL NOTED THAT NO ONE SEEMS WORRIED ABOUT
CREATING A LEGAL REGIME FOR SUCH SUBMARINES.

15. SOV DEL ENDED BY STATING THAT HE COULD SEE NO
NEED FOR A WORKING GROUP.

16. COMMENT: FROM THIS STATEMENT SOVIET COOPERATION IN

DEALING WITH PROBLEM BE FORTHCOMING AT PRESENT TIME. PRIVATE
CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET ADVISOR INDICATES SENSITIVITY
TO PROBLEM AT "HIGHEST LEVELS." ONLY EE'S ARE SUPPORTING
SOVS NEGATIVE ATTITUDE ON STUDY. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IN
BALANCE OF THIS WEEK HOW MANY OTHERS WILL
SUPPORT CANADIAN CALL FOR STUDY. INFORMALLY MOST NON-
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BLOC DELEGATIONS APPEAR TO WANT DETERMINED TO HAVE A
WORKING GROUP SET UP.

LEONARD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COMMITTEES, SPACE PROGRAMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978USUNN00548
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780070-1058
Format: TEL
From: USUN NEW YORK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780244/aaaabltp.tel
Line Count: 186
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 046647d5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3568148
Secure: OPEN
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TAGS: TSPA, XX, UN
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/046647d5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014